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BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN CALIFORNIA.

BY- GONSALVES, JULIA

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CALIFORNIA EDUCATORS AT ALL LEVELS HAVE A DEEP CONCERN FOR THE EDUCATION OF THOSE CHILDREN WHO SPEAK A LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH, AND THOSE EDUCATORS HAVE BEEN DEVELOPING SPECIAL BILINGUAL PROGRAMS FOR THESE YOUNGSTERS. TWO RECENT DEVELOPMENTS WHICH WILL AFFECT BILINGUAL EDUCATION ARE--(1) THE PASSAGE OF THE "BILINGUAL BILL", PERMITTING THE GOVERNING BOARD OF ANY SCHOOL TO DETERMINE WHEN AND UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES INSTRUCTION MAY BE GIVEN BILINGUALLY, AND (2) A REQUEST FROM THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION FOR THE STATE CURRICULUM COMMISSION TO RECOMMEND TEXTBOOKS IN ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE FOR POSSIBLE STATE ADOPTION. SEVERAL CALIFORNIA BILINGUAL PROGRAMS ARE CITED IN THIS REPORT, EVIDENCE THAT INNOVATIVE IDEAS ARE BEING IMPLEMENTED. THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HAS FURNISHED LEADERSHIP IN THE AREA OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION AND HAS BEEN DEEPLY INVOLVED IN PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO IMPROVE THE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES OF MEXICAN AMERICANS. THIS REPORT WAS PRESENTED AT THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE SOUTHWEST COUNCIL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS, EL PASO, TEXAS, NOVEMBER 10-11, 1967. (ES)

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Bilingual Education in California

JULIA GONSALVES, *Consultant*
Foreign Language Programs
California State Department of Education

It is extremely difficult to give comprehensive answers to questions which begin in this way: "What is California doing in the field of . . . ." This difficulty stems from the fact that California's approximately 1,100 school districts are essentially self-directing, and they often set up programs that are unique to their areas; in addition, the geography of the state often makes the exchange of data regarding new programs a slow process — even in this age of computers and telecommunications. Therefore, this report on bilingual education, which is in an embryonic stage in many school districts of the state, will of necessity be an overview.

Educators at all levels in California's school system have a deep concern for the education of children who speak a language other than English, and these educators have been developing programs for these children for some time. However, one of the most far-reaching developments in bilingual education in the state occurred in the California Legislature during its recent session. This lawmaking body passed a bill that authorizes the governing board of any school to determine "when and under what circumstances instruction may be given bilingually." Prior to the passage of the "Bilingual Bill," as it came to be known, the law stipulated that "all schools" had to be taught in the English language.

Another development of statewide significance was a recent action by the State Board of Education; this ten-member group has asked the State Curriculum Commission to recommend textbooks in English as a second language for possible state adoption.

However, in spite of these major breakthroughs at the state level, much remains to be done in bilingual education in California.

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We find in California, as we find elsewhere in the nation, programs which are erroneously labeled "bilingual." If we accept the dictionary definition of "bilingual" as "containing, expressed in, or using, two languages," we find a relatively few number of districts offering complete bilingual programs.

Although little has been done in providing bilingual education for children whose first language is a foreign language other than Spanish, much has been done for the Spanish-speaking child in California's public school system. However, when one realizes that approximately 11 percent of the public school population, kindergarten through grade twelve, is made up of children who come from homes in which Spanish is the predominant language, it is understandable that California has felt a greater need to provide bilingual programs for these pupils than for those whose native language is other than English or Spanish. The examples that follow have been selected to give the reader an idea of the types of bilingual programs now operating in California.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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SPECIFIC BILINGUAL PROGRAMS

CALEXICO

The State Department of Education, the office of the Imperial County Superintendent of Schools, and the Calexico Unified School District have cooperated in the development of a project entitled "Bilingual Education in English and Spanish, Grades 7, 8, and 9 of the Calexico Unified School District." This program is now in its second year under Title III of ESEA.

The population of Calexico Unified School District, adjoining Mexicali, Mexico, is 84 percent Mexican-American and 13 percent Anglo. The administration felt it imperative to capitalize on the inherent "bilingualism" within the school community to develop an instructional program of bilingual education. Carl Varner, Superintendent of Calexico Unified School District, directs the program and Mrs. Edith Donlevy serves as the District's Project Coordinator. The author is coordinator for the program at the state level.

MARYSVILLE

During the 1966-67 school year 26 Spanish-speaking pupils from low income homes in the Marysville Joint Unified School District were provided with a special program in bilingual instruction. This program was under the direction of the Mexican-American Education Research Project; John Plakos of the State Department is the project coordinator.

SAN JOSE

One of the innovative bilingual education programs in California that has been designed to meet the needs of the community is at Overfelt High School, San Jose. Spanish-speaking students, newly arrived from Mexico, are placed in the bilingual program where, in addition to instruction in English as a foreign language, they receive instruction in the Spanish language in mathematics, social sciences and Spanish. Salvatore Falcone, Spanish teacher at Overfelt High School, has been instrumental in developing the program.

OAKLAND

A special project funded under California Senate Bill No. 28 has made it possible for the Oakland Unified School District to provide a reading and mathematics demonstration program in the Roosevelt Junior High School. Over 100 Mexican-American children are being served in this program; these are pupils who have been identified as unable to grasp English enough to benefit in a typical classroom setting. Thomas A. MacCalla, Assistant Superintendent, Urban Educational Services, Oakland Unified School District, directs the program.

RELATED PROGRAMS

In addition to the bilingual prorgams that have been identified, many other related programs have been initiated in California on behalf of the state's bilingual population. Some of these programs are identified here.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

The Legislature passed a law in 1963 that provided $50,000 for a two-year pilot project to establish special programs of classes in English for 500 foreign-born minors in Imperial and San Diego counties. Funds were allocated on the basis of $50 per pupil annually. The State Department of Education was given responsibility for the administration of the program, and the State Board of Education set up the appropriate regulations. Mrs. Afton Dill Nance, Consultant in Elementary Education, was designated to coordinate the program from the state level.

The Legislature extended the program in 1965 for the whole state, and it made native as well as foreign-born minors eligible for the special instruction. Funds were increased to $50,000 annually, and the program was extended for a five-year period (1965-1970). The allocation of $50 per pupil remained the same. Eight districts were included in the original project and, currently, 16 districts are participating.

Inservice education of teachers and others interested in the education of Spanish-speaking children has been a major effort. In the summer of 1963, a three-week conference on Teaching English as a Second Language was held in the Alum Rock School District. The conference was initiated by Miss Helen Heffernan, then Chief of the Bureau of Elementary Education, and was cosponsored by the Department of Education, San Jose State College, and the Alum Rock School District. The Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington D.C. provided the services of a linguist, and the Rosenberg Foundation gave funds to pay part of the tuition and expenses of the 60 educators selected to attend.

Since the Alum Rock conference, weekend conferences of a similar nature have been cosponsored by the State Department of Education and interested school districts, counties, and institutions of higher education. Reports of these conferences have been published.

OTHER PROGRAMS IN ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Scores of school districts in California are offering classes in English as a second language. As one example, four demonstration centers of exemplary programs in teaching English as a second language have been estabished in San Diego County. Herbert Ibarra is the Project Director.

The following persons can also provide information regarding programs in English as a second language: Mrs .Ruth Fifield, Office of Imperial County Superintendent of Schools; Robert Landen, Office of San Diego Superintendent of Schools; Mrs. Virginia Dominguez, Los Angeles Unified School District; Mrs. Edith Donlevy, Calexico Unified School District; Juan Solis, Carlsbad School District; and Miss Betty Fowler, Stanislaus County Superintendent of Schools.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

The State Department of Education is deeply involved in programs designed to improve the educational opportunities of Mexican-American pupils and to strengthen the lines of communication with Spanish-

speaking parents to the end that they will better understand the schools' educational goals for their children. For a number of years, the State Department of Education, with funds from the National Defense Education Act Administration, has sponsored a monthly Spanish program on television station KMEX in Los Angeles. Tapes of these programs are available.

In addition to programs funded by NDEA, the State Department of Education has initiated a number of programs funded under the Elementary Secondary Education Act. Additional information about these and other programs for the Mexican-American population of California may be obtained from Eugene Gonzales, Assistant Superintendent of Public Instruction State Department of Education, Los Angeles.

It has been possible in this report to touch upon only a few programs in California schools directed to the state's bilingual population. These, however, give evidence of the fact that innovative ideas are being implemented and that a new curriculum is being formulated.